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# Bench Press

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## All Judges Get aiSmartBench



Since October 2014 the 22<sup>nd</sup> Judicial Circuit has been working with Mentis Technology in order to implement their aiSmartBench application. This technology is designed to help the Court eliminate the need for paper files and by eliminating the paper files the Court's efficiency goes up and costs go down.

Judges are able to see case summary information, parties, financial information, attorney information and events on one screen. Additionally from this one screen users can access images of documents via built in integration. Documents previously had not been

searchable; however, not only are case documents searchable via optical character recognition; a judge can now search a word or phrase across all of the court documents in OnBase.

Judges are able to make annotations on the document images in the form of highlighting, using push pins and even typed "sticky notes."

It was originally anticipated that from start to finish, this project would take a minimum of 3 years to get all of the judges on the new system.

The system went live in December with 4 primary users, Judge Weech, Judge

Cowlin, Judge Mangiamiele and Judge Gerhardt. The project judges immediately began using the system and the "go live" was a rather non-event as the application performed nearly flawlessly.

After going live with the system, discussions began in earnest about the next steps of the project and establishing a time line for the implementation of the remaining judges. Discussions were held with the Circuit Clerk of the Court and the vendor.

The president of Mentis Technology made an offer to allow the necessary licensing to give all of the judges access, and agreed to send and invoice for those costs in May; thereby allowing all of the judges immediate access to the program. All costs associated with the purchase of this project were paid from fees collected by the Circuit Clerk for Court Automation.

The 22<sup>nd</sup> Judicial Circuit is the only circuit in the State of Illinois with this technology.

## Court Services Recognizes Achievements — Lori Trout



Pictured Left to Right - Seth Krause, Rob Tobin, Steve Wisniewski, Wendy Wesolek, Sandy Croneigh, Shannon Prigge, Becky Self, James Edwards

During this past month, Probation and Court Services recognized the length of service of its employees. The years of experience ranged from five to twenty-five years and consisted of officers, managers and support staff from the adult and juvenile divisions. Their years of experience are an invaluable asset to the department. As noted, officers have a significant depth of experience spanning to twenty-five years and beyond. During this period of time, programming and the approach to case supervision has changed as well.

Probation and Court Services is beginning the utilization and implementation of *Thinking for a Change*. *Thinking for a Change* is a cognitive behavioral curriculum that imparts social skills training, cognitive self-change, and problem solving skills through a group modality to higher risk offenders. Probation Officers Sue Anne Mason, Katie Prichard and community based service providers have been trained through the National Institute of Corrections as group facilitators. Probation and Court Services is about to begin the journey of direct service in the juvenile division and referring adult offenders to community based *Thinking for a Change*

programming.

The juvenile group is scheduled to begin in the spring of this year. Also, the adult division is currently utilizing Moral Recognition Therapy which is a systemic treatment strategy that seeks to reduce recidivism among offenders by increasing moral reasoning. These initiatives will be used in conjunction with the Effective Practices in Community Supervision (EPICS II) being utilized by probation officers. How a person thinks, controls their behavior and these program initiatives support and challenge offenders to think differently and thereby effectuating long-lasting behavioral change.



## Court Services Partners with AMI / SCRAM (Secure Remote Alcohol Monitoring)



"This is not a one size fits all approach to alcohol offenders, instead it is about long term behavior change."

The 22<sup>nd</sup> Judicial Circuit Probation & Court Services' is adding 24/7 alcohol monitoring to its evidence-based practices to improve public safety, while reducing costs. In keeping with nationally recognized, evidence-based practices, probation officers routinely screen convicted offenders for alcohol abuse issues. Under the new initiative, when alcohol addiction is the root cause of a person's criminal activities, a device will be worn by the offender, 24/7 on the ankle to ensure offenders aren't drinking. Known as SCRAM Continuous Alcohol Monitoring, or SCRAM CAM, the anklet automatically tests a subject's perspiration every 30 minutes to measure for alcohol consumption. The department plans to use the technology for high-risk DUI offenders, as well as for alcohol-involved domestic violence cases and other crimes where drinking was a primary factor. The combination of supervision by probation staff, alcohol monitoring and referrals to other services, like treatment and alcohol education, is designed to help offenders address their

alcohol issues and reduce the chances that they will reoffend.

"When we separate these offenders from alcohol, we know they aren't going to be out drinking and driving or committing other alcohol-involved crimes," says Probation Director Walt Pesterfield. "Through supervision and alcohol monitoring technology, we are keeping them out of prison, saving taxpayers' money, and we are giving these offenders the tools and support to get sober and get their lives back on track."

The 22<sup>nd</sup> Judicial Circuit of McHenry County, Department of Probation and Court Services is partnering with Alcohol Monitors of Illinois (AMI), a subsidiary of Alcohol Monitoring Systems (AMS) to implement the new technology. Headquartered in Will County and serving 14 counties in the state, AMI has been the leading provider of alcohol monitoring services in Northern Illinois since 2007.

"This is not a one

size fits all approach to alcohol offenders; instead it is about long-term behavior change of the individual. Twenty years of research supports that only those individuals who are properly assessed and require this level of intervention will be included in this program. We are targeting those individuals who have a high risk to reoffend and a high need of intervention or treatment. If we were to include individuals who do not require this level of intervention, we can actually see worse outcomes for the individual and an increase in reoffending; the research and data tells us that," said Dan Wallis, Trial Court Administrator.

Offenders will pay for the monitoring with a sliding scale available to help people who are indigent or who cannot afford the costs.



## Meet the Newest Face in Court Administration — Bryanna Blackard



I have lived in Lake County for 33 years, but my heart resides in McHenry County. On the weekends, I enjoy shopping in Johnsburg, having breakfast at the Green Street Café in McHenry, taking hikes in Moraine Hills, boating on the Chain O' Lakes, and volunteering for the Habitat of Humanity of McHenry County. My boyfriend, Josh, and I have been dating for fifteen years. We currently do not have any children or pets, but we love watching our beloved Chicago Blackhawks, visiting with our family and friends, and staying active.

I started working at a local Baskin Robins when I was 13 years old, but it was not until 2005 when I realized what I really wanted

to do in this world. I started working for the Mundelein Police Department as a civilian employee in their records department. Working closely with the public and police force not only gave me a great sense of pride, but it also gave me a great sense of purpose. I went on to assist in the creation of the police department and records unit in Hainesville (IL) in 2008. When the Hainesville Police Department permanently closed, I knew it was time to finish my Bachelor's Degree. In 2005, I graduated from the College of Lake County with an Associates of Arts degree in Sociology. I also played on CLC's women's soccer team. In 2012, after Hainesville PD, I enrolled and commuted to the University of Wisconsin-Parkside. I graduated from

UW-P in 2014 with a Bachelor of Arts Degree with a double major in Sociology and Criminal Justice. During those 2 years, I worked as hard as I could to make the Dean's List every semester and to make the Provost's List with straight A(s) my last semester, which I am very humbled by. By going back to school, I have a new found love for sociological research and for the overall criminal justice systems and processes. I really would have loved to continue to law school after UW-P, but due to financial restraints, it has been put on the back burner.

I am absolutely ecstatic and grateful to be a part of the Court Administration team and an employee of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Judicial Circuit, which is why you will always see me smiling. I have met so many wonderful people in the six months that I have been here. I cannot wait to see where this opportunity takes me.







## Do Not Forget About Our Promethean Technology

Do you have a trial coming up at the McHenry County Government Center and you find yourself thinking about new ways to present your evidence?

Remember the 22<sup>nd</sup> Judicial Circuit has two mobile Promethean "SmartBoards" for attorneys to use. If you have a laptop and are slightly familiar with Microsoft PowerPoint you can run the Promethean.

Recently the Court provided training for interested attorneys in juvenile court. Additionally we are considering dates in April to host additional training for the McHenry County State's Attorney's Office and the McHenry County Public Defender's Office, and other interested attorneys.

Members of Court Administration will take the

time to discuss the operation of the "SmartBoard," how to build your presentation, and how to manipulate items that are displayed using the ActiveInspire software.

If you would like additional information, Please contact Court Administration at (815) 334-4385 and ask to speak with Matt Weingart.

## Court Hosts St. Mary's 7<sup>th</sup> Grade



On March 15<sup>th</sup>, the 22<sup>nd</sup> Judicial Circuit hosted the 7<sup>th</sup> grade class from St. Mary's in Woodstock.

As part of the tour, students were exposed to the different courtrooms, had time to speak with Judge Weech,

Judge Chmiel, and Judge Costello.

Students participated in a mock trial with Judge Nader. The purposes of courts were discussed, along with the different functions the court is responsible for including the Drug Court and Mental Health Court.

Students also had the opportunity to meet with Lou Bianchi and Donna Kelly to discuss the operation of the McHenry County State's Attorney's Office.

## Office of Special Projects — Jason Sterwerf

The Twenty Second Judicial Circuit Office of Special Projects falls within the Department of Court Administration and has five full time employees whose primary task is the programmatic administration and care coordination of defendants involved in the Adult Drug Court and Mental Health Court programs. The Court Administration staff includes a Director, Nurse, Case Manager and two Clinicians. Specialty Courts such as Drug and Mental Health Courts are integral pieces of the criminal justice system as research confirms that 60-80% of individuals incarcerated in local jails and prisons meet criteria for substance abuse/dependence and there are more persons with mental illness in jails and prisons than in hospitals. Recognizing the need to break the cycle of untreated behavioral health disorders and crime, Adult Drug Courts now number 2500 worldwide and Mental Health Courts now number over 300 throughout the nation. In Illinois alone there are currently 61 Drug Courts, 23 Mental Health Courts and 13 Veterans Courts. The Twenty Second Judicial Circuit's Mental Health Court was convened in

April of 2007 and the Adult Drug Court accepted its first participant on December 1, 2011. Combined the programs have 115 graduates who have less than a 12% criminal recidivism rate. The scientific community has put Specialty Courts under its microscope and concluded that they significantly increase recovery and reduce crime while doing it cheaper than any other justice strategy.

The Specialty Courts plan to continue to reduce recidivism rates within the county, reduce client law enforcement contacts, and provide access to psychiatric and therapeutic care. We also will continue to improve participant's ability to independently manage psychiatric, therapeutic, and medical care, while improving family, social, and community relationships.

The Adult Drug Court and Mental Health Court programs are always seeking new opportunities and collaborative partnerships. The Adult Drug Court submitted a teleservices delivery project to the National Drug Court Institute (NDCI). The project was selected based on the proposal and is one of three

projects that the NDCI selected to monitor. The Adult Drug Court is excited to begin to partner with the National Drug Court Institute to launch the new Teleservices court project. There have been several meetings to begin work on the project; schedule potential site visits to aid in support, and measure outcomes for the NDCI. The project design is to make it possible for Drug Court Participants to "attend" court dates via a technology based application, (i.e. Skype). Allowing remote access for participants in their court hearing while remaining at the inpatient facility, leads to improved commitment to our program while gaining trust with team members and Judge Weech. The Specialty Courts Alumni Recovery Program (S.C.A.R.P.) hosted their first Alumni event on Saturday March 19, 2016 for a Breakfast and Bowling for participants and sponsor appreciation.

If you have any questions please contact Jason Sterwerf (815) 334-4913.



## Jury Commission Continues to Seek Current Magazines

Every Monday, 100 jurors are summoned for jury duty. The Jury Commission tries to supply magazines for the jurors while they are waiting. The court does not subscribe to any magazines, newspapers, or periodicals.

If you have a stack of magazines that you would like to donate to the Jury Commission, it would be very much appreciated. When you're done reading your favorite monthly magazine, please think about dropping it off at the Jury Commission.



I WANT YOUR

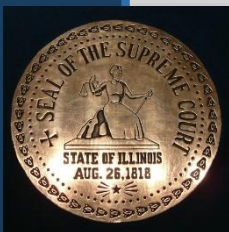


## Supreme Court Announces Mandatory Civil E-Filing of Documents

Chief Justice Rita B. Garman and the Illinois Supreme Court has announced that the electronic filing of documents in civil cases will be required in the Supreme Court and five districts of the Appellate Court effective July 1, 2017, and in all circuit courts effective January 1, 2018. This announcement marks the latest step in the Court's ongoing effort to utilize technology to make the court system more efficient. The Court's statewide e-filing initiative will provide a streamlined process for filing

documents, conserve environmental resources and time, and generate long-term savings. Once these deadlines pass, attorneys and self-represented litigants will not be allowed to file paper documents, except for documents exempted by rules adopted by the Court or in the event of emergency. Courts will be required to provide designated space, the necessary equipment, and technical support for self-represented litigants who do not have access to computers and are seeking to e-file documents during

regular court hours. The Circuit Court for the 22<sup>nd</sup> Judicial Circuit and the Office of the Circuit Clerk of the Court was approved by the Illinois Supreme Court to begin accepting civil E-Filed documents effective September 2, 2013. The benefits of E-Filed documents have already been recognized by the Court and the Court would encourage all attorneys who file civil documents to begin to utilize E-Filing now, rather than waiting for the January 1, 2018 deadline.



## From the Desk of the Court Administrator — Dan Wallis



According to the great pontificator Yogi Berra, "If this were a perfect world, it would not be." Because we can never attain perfection, does that mean we should not strive for it? Of course not. Often times it is not necessarily the destination rather it is the trip along the way that is important.

The same is true for obtaining public trust and confidence in the judiciary. It is one of the noblest of goals, but while we strive to attain it, we never will. Not because we did not try; rather because of the changing expectations of the citizens who we are here to serve.

In 1787, Alexander Hamilton penned Federalist Paper 17, in order to help explain this new document called the "Constitution of the United States." As part of his letter, Hamilton

wrote: "There is one transcendent advantage belonging to the province of the State governments, which alone suffices to place the matter in a clear and satisfactory light,—I mean the ordinary administration of criminal and civil justice. This, of all others, is the most powerful, most universal, and most attractive source of popular obedience and attachment. It is that which, being the immediate and visible guardian of life and property, having its benefits and its terrors in constant activity before the public eye, regulating all those personal interests and familiar concerns to which the sensibility of individuals is more immediately awake, contributes, more than any other circumstance, to impressing upon the minds of the people, affection, esteem, and reverence towards the government." Hamilton is specifically talking about public trust and confidence in the judicial branch of government. I believe that Hamilton's words are as

important now as they were in 1787. Fast forward 229 years and while the goal may be the same, how we try to obtain it has changed. In order to even come close to achieving our goal, we must build upon a sound foundation. Several years ago while working with a colleague from the National Center for State Courts we discussed this topic in depth. What we came up with was a simple but yet very complicated mathematical equation:

Access to Justice  
+  
Expediency and Timeliness  
+  
Equality, Fairness, and Integrity  
+  
Independence and Accountability  
Public Trust and Confidence in the Judiciary

Without any of the building blocks listed above, there is no way achieve our goal. By granting access, doing our business timely, ensuring fairness to the process, and being accountable, only then can we come close. We will continue to do our very best every day to instill the trust in the judicial branch of government in McHenry County. It's just too important not to.

*-Dan Wallis*

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A time of danger;

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A time of opportunity;





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**The mission of the 22<sup>nd</sup>  
Judicial Circuit of  
McHenry County is to be  
the guardian of life,  
liberty and property to  
all seeking access to  
justice, by adhering to  
practices that ensure  
equality, fairness and  
confidence in the  
judiciary.**

